

Given a Break, North Atlantic Swordfish Closer to Recovery

North Atlantic swordfish are coming back, thanks in part to the success of the "Give Swordfish a Break" campaign.

"Hats off to the chefs, hotels, restaurants, and other purveyors of seafood for their help in achieving this great victory," praises Lisa Speer, a senior policy analyst with the Natural Resources Defense Council, which spearheaded the campaign along with SeaWeb. "This success story shows that if you give fish a break, even very depleted populations can come back."

The dramatic recovery, however, is threatened by the recent decision of the international commission that regulates the swordfish fishery in the Atlantic to prematurely increase the quotas by almost 40%. The commission had recently reported that over the past three years north Atlantic swordfish had recovered to 94% of healthy levels and that young fish represent much of the increase.



"Unfortunately, the unwise increase in quota is playing Russian roulette with the recovery," continued Speer. "This makes it more important than ever to retain strong protections of swordfish nursery areas."

From 1998 to 2000, the groundbreaking "Give Swordfish a Break" campaign mobilized hundreds of chefs and consumers to support recovery measures to restore north Atlantic swordfish. "I'm very happy that the swordfish population has recouped so much that it can be reintroduced onto restaurant menus," says campaign spokesperson Nora Pouillon, owner of Restaurant Nora and Asia Nora in Washington D.C. "Of course, chefs have to be able to verify the sustainability of the fish."

"All the participants in the 'Give Swordfish a Break' campaign can feel incredibly proud that their actions helped make the difference for this fish," adds Vikki Spruill, SeaWeb's president. "The campaign showed consumers that making better seafood choices is good for the ocean, good for the fish, and good for the fishermen." The campaign officially ended in August 2000 when the U.S. government closed nursery areas in U.S. waters, thus meeting the second goal of the campaign. International quota restrictions were adopted in 1999.

For more information, visit www.seaweb.org/programs/swordfish.

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The Holidays Can Be a Sustainable Time

As the holiday season approaches, Seafood Choices Alliance reminds you of some of the mouthwatering dishes that can be prepared with ocean-friendly seafood. To get the most current ideas, we went straight to the source—our partners and subscribers, who generously shared their ideas and recipes for this holiday season. Some of their thoughts appear below. And see Seasonal Scoop page 6, or our special holiday page online, www.seafoodchoices.com, for even more good choices. Enjoy!

Fish and shellfish have been an integral part of American holiday meals for centuries. Andrea Kavanagh of the National Environmental Trust reminds us that “seafood was all over the original Thanksgiving table.” Indeed, the menu at that first harvest celebration in 1621—which evolved into our current Thanksgiving holiday—included boiled cod, bass, and lobster.

According to Jennifer Dianto, Seafood Watch program manager at the Monterey Bay Aquarium, a well-known seafood-related Italian holiday tradition is the “Feast of the Seven Fishes,” or La Vigilia, which is celebrated on Christmas Eve. Dianto recommends creating your own feast from the bounty right here in the United States. Good options include: mussels (wild or farmed); clams (wild or farmed); California market squid; scallops (bay or sea); hook-and-line-caught Atlantic cod or Pacific Cod; and striped

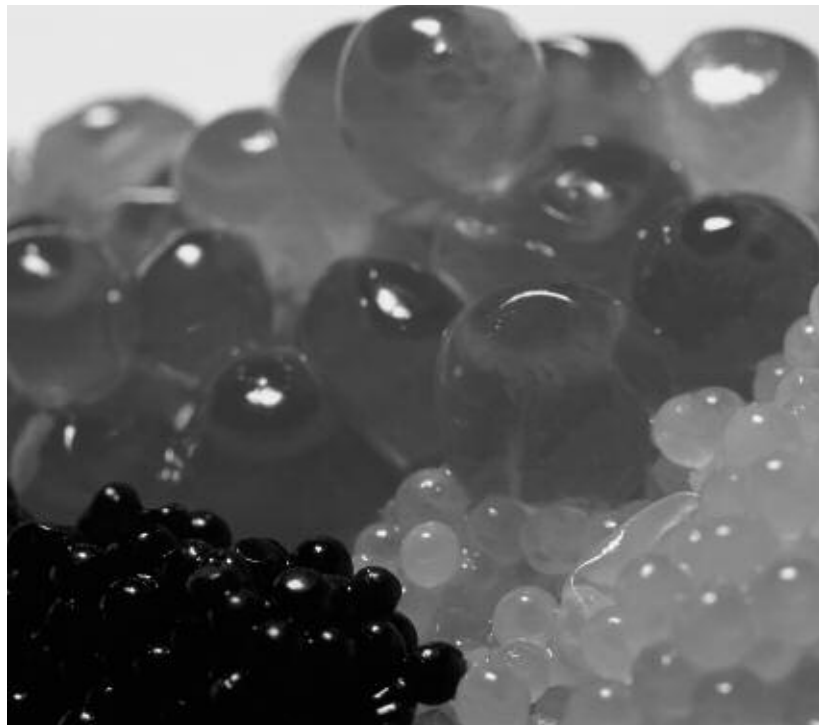


Photo by Bill Reese, courtesy of Caviar Emporior.

A Better Choice: American caviars include farmed varieties produced from white sturgeon, paddlefish, and rainbow trout, and wild Alaska salmon.

bass (wild or farmed). If cod is unavailable, Pacific halibut is a good alternative.

From coast to coast, chefs and restaurants across the country will be showcasing regional seafood specialties this holiday season.

“This year, one sustainable fish we’re really focusing on here in Charleston is wreckfish,” says Angel Passailaigue, public relations manager at the South Carolina Aquarium. A large bottom-living fish similar to a grouper, the wreckfish’s fishing and spawning ground is just off the South Carolina and Georgia coasts. Chef Robert Stehling of the Hominy Grill in Charleston serves wreckfish muddle, which is “a really good wintertime stew,” according to Passailaigue.

The Aquarium promotes domestic and local sustainable seafood options through its Sustainable Seafood Education Project, in collaboration with Johnson & Wales University, South Carolina Coastal Conservation League, and the University of South Carolina.

Chefs are getting hooked on local fish in the Northeast, too. Fishermen in Chatham, Massachusetts, use traditional, eco-friendly methods to catch a flavorful, high-quality fish they call “Chatham hooked cod.” And restaurants from Boston to New York are dishing up this carefully caught cod. “Because this fish is caught with hook-and-line, there is little impact on sensitive ocean habitats,” says Priscilla Brooks, director of the

Marine Resources Project at the Conservation Law Foundation, which is helping to promote the cod campaign (see Conservation Corner for more information).

On the West Coast, Chef Daniel Long of the Bon Appetit Management Company at the Oracle Conference Center in Redwood Shores, California, enjoys serving California sturgeon caviar in several excellent recipes, such as pan-seared sturgeon with Riesling sauce (see page 6).

And down the coast in southern California, Chef-Owner Mary Sue Milliken of the Border Grill in Santa Monica, says "I especially like fish soups and fish stews at this time of year. We do a great Spanish fish stew with northern Alaskan halibut, which I really love. It's great for entertaining, both at the restaurant and at home, because you can make everything ahead of time; then, you bring it to a boil and drop in the fish; it then comes to another boil and you're done. We usually make it with just halibut, but it can be made with a million different kinds of seafood, including clams, mussels, shrimp, and scallops."

Milliken and her co-owner Susan Feniger also serve a ceviche with smoked mussels, roasted yellow beets, and jícama. "It's a really nice thing to serve around holiday time, too," says Milliken. The Border Grill recipes, along with all of the recipes mentioned here, are available online at www.seafoodchoices.com. ●

American Caviars, Doubly Good Eggs

Caviar... the word alone conjures up images of Russian royalty and high society. The traditional, and most coveted, source of caviar is the sturgeon of the Caspian Sea. But these ancient fish, whose populations have plummeted in recent years, face severe pressures from overfishing and poaching. Luckily, sturgeon can be farmed in ways that are environmentally responsible. This is good news for both connoisseurs and the wild fish.

Caviar varieties produced from some U.S.-based aquaculture operations offer excellent taste with little environmental impact. These farmed products are helping to supply the demand for caviar—the U.S. imports about 80% of the world's beluga caviar—and reduce pressure on critically threatened Caspian Sea sturgeon.

Sturgeon breeding was first successfully practiced in 1930 in the Soviet Union. In the United States, white sturgeon were artificially spawned in 1979 in California.

Sturgeon farms are expensive to operate, in part because sturgeon females require 8 years or more to reach reproductive age. Aquaculturists have developed techniques to perform "caesareans" on females, which maximizes the investment by keeping the fish alive for future reproductive purposes.

Although some aquaculture raises certain environmental concerns such as pollution of waterways, sturgeon aquaculture operations in the United States avoid some of the problems by the fact that they are located on land, in enclosed tanks that recycle wastewater.

The largest U.S. caviar aquaculture operations are located in California, including Stolt Sea Farm's Sterling Caviar and Tsar Nicoulai Caviar. Other caviar varieties farmed in the United States include paddlefish and rainbow trout roes. Outside of the United States, sturgeon farming is in various stages of development and production in Europe, South America and the Middle East.

In related news, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing to list beluga sturgeon as an endangered species and has extended its public comment period to December 28. It's not too late, therefore, to register your support of this listing. Please contact Sunny Wu of Caviar Emptor at 202/483 9570.

To learn more about sustainable U.S. sturgeon aquaculture operations, contact the Caviar Emptor campaign at 202/483 9570 or visit www.CaviarEmptor.org. For more information on aquaculture in general, contact the SeaWeb Aquaculture Clearinghouse at 401/272 8822 or www.AquacultureClearinghouse.org. ●



Photo by Christopher Pala, courtesy of Caviar Emptor.

Handle with care: Alexander Kitanov of the Bios hatchery near Astrakhan, Russia, with one of the beluga sturgeon females that have undergone caesarian-like operations. The eggs were hatched and released into the Volga River in Russia as fingerlings. In two years, this female will once again be impregnated in captivity.

SUBSCRIBER PROFILES

From Farm to Table

This regular column is devoted to you, our subscribers. Seafood Choices recently sat down with two individuals who connect environmental issues from land to sea, and from farm to table. **Sally Eason** is the owner of the **Sunburst Trout Company** in Canton, North Carolina. Founded in 1948, the company markets farmed rainbow trout and trout roe. **Peter Hoffman** is the chef and owner of **Savoy**, a Mediterranean restaurant in New York City that he opened with his wife in 1990. Hoffman is also the national chair of the Chefs Collaborative, an organization promoting local, seasonal, and artisanal foods.

Here's what they had to say in support of making smart seafood choices.

Sally Eason, owner of the **Sunburst Trout Company**:

I've always been interested in sustaining anything that belongs to our environment. My parents were that way long before it was avant-garde to be that way, so I was raised to think along those lines. And I have a business that makes it easy to go along with the idea of sustainable foods. I have always lived in an agricultural area, so being environmentally aware is in the foreground for those living around me. If we all don't get on this bandwagon, eventually we'll have nothing to eat. Not in our lifetimes, but maybe in our grandchildren's. I believe that everyone involved in the aquaculture industry worldwide needs to be more responsible, both personally and corporately.

I find there are more and more people each year who subscribe to the same philosophy. And I think that as the global consciousness shifts, people will realize that we will have to pay more money to get the foods that are not stealing constantly from our lands and our waters. It will be gradual, but we are going to have to shift our mindset to be more responsible.



Peter Hoffman, Chef-Owner of **Savoy**: I've always been very involved in fishing and marine diversity. I worked as a shad fisherman on the Hudson River after I graduated from high school. I also ran a small fish business where I went down to Fulton Fish Market and brought fish back to the people in the town where I lived. It was back then, in 1973, when I started to get a real sense of what was coming into the market. In the mid '80s, I came back to New York and started to work as a chef. I went back to Fulton and saw that the swordfish were getting smaller. So I wanted to raise my own level of education and awareness. I saw that this was really an important issue for chefs, because we use so much of the product and we love it. Later on, I became involved in the Chefs Collaborative and its Seafood Solutions Program.



We need more effective [fisheries] management; that's something we should expect of our government. As chefs, we need to celebrate diversity in the oceans so that we are not relying too heavily on any one species. We also have a responsibility to educate our diners, cooks, and fellow chefs about the terms and issues so that we know where we are treading. In a certain way, consumption is about the reduction of resource, but we need to know that we are doing it in places that are well managed and have sustainable stock. And we need to know when we are not completely perfect in our use, because of consumer demand or whatever.

Seafood Choices continues to steadily increase its number of subscribers. Currently, more than 1,500 seafood professionals from a diverse array of occupations nationwide support our goal of making better seafood choices.

To learn more about Seafood Choices Alliance subscribers, or to subscribe, call 866/SEA MORE or log on to www.seafoodchoices.com. ●



issues so that you can become involved in the seafood choices movement.

Documentary educates in the kitchen and the classroom

Empty Oceans, Empty Nets produced by **Habitat Media**, offers crucial information on seafood for anyone working in the seafood sector. The film explores why some fisheries face a murky future, what some are doing to better manage the resource, and how some have achieved the goals of a sustainable fishery. It's proved to be popular with many subscribers.

Scott Maurer, executive sous chef for The Peabody Orlando, sees *Empty Oceans* as a means

Many seafood campaigns exist to educate consumers and the food sector about the environmental impacts of seafood. Conservation Corner steers you through the

“to help pass the word and get more people involved—not only culinarians but the dining public as well.”

“The more we inform our customers, the more they will join in and support our mission,” agrees James Burns, Chef and Owner of J.Bistro in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

Culinary schools like the **French Culinary Institute**, the **Cooking School of the Rockies**, and **The Institute for Culinary Education** are also using *Empty Oceans* to teach instructors and culinary students about the issue. **The James Beard Foundation** is “exploring ways in which this information can be included in future programs of Spoons Across America”—a children’s culinary education program which “reaches out to elementary school children to teach them about food, from farm to table.”

If you haven’t done so already, contact Seafood Choices to get your free copy.

Subscribers can call 866/SEA MORE or email info@seafoodchoices.com for a free copy. ●

In October, the **Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fisherman’s Association (CCCHFA)**, **Conservation Law Foundation**, and **Chefs Collaborative** led a promotion of Chatham Hooked Cod in Boston restaurants. CCCHFA fishermen use traditional hook and line gear—an environmentally friendly fishing method—to catch this extremely fresh, high quality cod they refer to as “**Chatham Hooked Cod**.” Visit www.clf.org and www.ccchfa.org for more information. To get Chatham Hooked Cod contact the CCCHFA at 508/945 2432.

The **Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform (CAAR)** has launched a consumer campaign, “**Farmed and Dangerous**,” to urge West Coast chefs, retailers, and consumers to stop serving, selling, and eating farmed salmon. To get a copy of the brochure, “**Think Twice About Eating Farmed Salmon**” and to learn how you can get involved, contact CAAR at 604/699 0065 or visit www.farmedanddangerous.org.

The **Center for Sustainable Fisheries** at the University of Miami’s Rosenstil School of Marine and Atmospheric Science announces a new guide for teachers called **Fish Trouble**, which presents fisheries education activities. The guide is a collaboration of the Center and **Audubon’s Living Oceans Program**, and is available online at <http://csf.rsmas.Miami.edu/projects.html>. Stay tuned for a printed version. ●

Grouper of the Season

Thank you to Seafood Choices subscribers who signed the letter to Secretary Gale Norton of the Department of the Interior, supporting the listing of beluga sturgeon as an endangered species. **Caviar Emptor** continues to work towards the conservation of beluga sturgeon, which are currently on the brink of extinction. You can support these efforts by offering sustainable caviar varieties as an alternative to wild beluga caviar this holiday season (see Aquaculture story, page 3).

More information about Seafood Choices partners can be found at www.seafoodchoices.com. ●

SEASONAL SCOOP

Give the Gift of Good Choices

Our gift to you this season is a guide to making it a sustainable one. Giving the gift of good seafood choices supports local suppliers and communities and has the least impact on the ocean environment, meeting an economic and environmental bottom line. Here are our selections for making your holiday season an ocean-friendly one; more good choices can be found in our SeaSense database at www.seafoodchoices.com.

Shrimp: Seek out wild spot prawns from Monterey Bay and Alaska (trap caught) and wild bay shrimp from Maine. And Mardi Gras is just around the corner; crawfish are another excellent substitute for shrimp.

Salmon: Wild Alaska salmon, flash frozen at sea (FAS), and Arctic char (wild and farmed), are smart alternatives to farmed/Atlantic salmon.

Caviars: Serving American farmed white sturgeon caviar from California (see page 3), farmed paddlefish roe from Missouri, and farmed rainbow trout roe (see page 4) from North Carolina takes pressure off endangered Caspian sturgeon.

Cod: Pacific cod is available January-March from Alaska, and Chatham hooked cod is caught with hook and line by dayboats from the waters of Cape Cod (see page 5).

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PAN SEARED CALIFORNIA STURGEON with Riesling Sauce

Chef **Daniel Long**, Bon Appetit Management Company
Redwood Shores, California

6, 6 to 8 ounce boneless skinless farm raised sturgeon steaks, or one 2 1/2 + pound farm raised sturgeon filet (skin off).
salt, pepper, & olive oil
pinch of fresh ground coriander seed

3 cups Riesling wine, (can substitute white zinfandel)
3 sliced medium shallots
1/2 cup fresh or frozen raspberries
1 tsp whole black pepper
1 California bay leaf
1/2 tsp dry juniper berries, whole
1/4 cup cold butter, diced
salt to taste (sea salt or kosher)
3 tb California sturgeon caviar (optional)
whole cilantro leaves

Season the individual steaks with salt, pepper, coriander and olive oil, reserve in refrigerator until ready to cook. For a holiday table display, you can sear the whole filet and serve it on a long platter.

Put wine, shallots, raspberries, whole black pepper, bay leaf, and juniper berries in small, heavy saucepan. Put over low heat on stove until reduced to 25% (between 3/4 and 1 cup). Strain out all the solids and let stand on stovetop off of the heat.

Meanwhile, preheat oven to 350 degrees. Heat large, heavy ovenproof skillet until hot enough to sizzle water. Lightly oil the pan, and place seasoned filets in, flipping once when golden brown on bottom. Transfer to hot oven once browned on both sides, and turn oven off. The filets in a hot pan in a hot oven should finish cooking in 10 minutes or so. You can tell when sturgeon is done when it flakes under gentle pressure. If you have unusually thick filets, leave the oven on for 5-10 minutes after putting fish in.

Take the still warm sauce and whisk in the cold butter until sauce is velvety and slightly thickened. Season with salt to taste. Leave sauce at warm room temperature. Take sturgeon out of oven and transfer to serving dish or individual plates. Surround the fish with the sauce and top with cilantro leaves and dollop of caviar.

Serves 6

Sablefish: Sablefish from Alaska and Canada (marketed as black cod), another ocean-friendly choice, can replace Chilean sea bass, which is suffering from illegal fishing and overfishing.

Shellfish: Farmed oysters, mussels and clams (featured in last season's Afishianado) remain responsible choices. Atlantic bay scallops, another good choice, are in season October-May.

Last season's Afishianado featured a story on sourcing sustainable seafood. If you've found a good source, let us know so we can spread the word! Fax to 202/483 3518, or email info@seafoodchoices.com. ●

WASHINGTON BEAT

SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD ON THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

In November, countries gathered in Santiago, Chile to discuss global trade of endangered and threatened species, including the Patagonian toothfish. The international body which regulates trade of such species is called the Commission for International Trade in Endangered Species. On the agenda was whether the Patagonian toothfish (more popularly known as "Chilean sea bass") merits listing as a threatened species, thereby limiting international trade of the fish. Illegal fishing (estimated to be five times greater than legal fishing) and overfishing pose serious threats to the Patagonian toothfish, found in Antarctic waters. The toothfish matures slowly and can live to be over 35 years old, making them vulnerable to fishing pressures.

In other international action, governments attending the World Summit on Sustainable Development this past September promised to restore the world's depleted fisheries by 2015, to create marine protected areas by 2012, and to put into place by 2005 international plans of action on fishing capacity and illegal/unreported/unregulated fishing. If these promises are kept, it will be good news for the world's oceans. ●



SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD in THE NEWS

Lowcountry loco for local seafood.

Charleston's finest chefs and restaurants have joined forces with the South Carolina Aquarium, the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League, Johnson and Wales University, and the University of South Carolina to create the Sustainable Seafood Education Project. The project highlights the current challenges facing ocean fisheries and promotes the consumption of locally caught seafood. (See story page 2).

Saying no to GMOs. In September about 200 restaurants, grocers, and seafood distributors pledged not to buy, serve, or sell fish created by biotechnology. The fish pledge was organized by the Center for Food Safety, Clean Water Action, and Friends of the Earth. The Food and Drug Administration is considering an application to market farmed Atlantic salmon that have been genetically engineered to grow twice as fast as salmon currently being raised.

Neither lean nor mean. A new cookbook entitled *Marine Cuisine*, from the Alaska Marine Conservation Council, showcases 65 seafood recipes from Alaska's fishing families. It retails for \$12.95 and can be ordered by calling 907-277-5357.

Well done. This past fall, the Wellfleet Chamber of Commerce, Guinness, and SPAT (Shellfish Promotion and Tasting) hosted the second annual Wellfleet Oyster Festival. Events included a street fair, "Restaurant Olympics," Shuck 'n' Run 5K race, and a shucking contest, of course. All proceeds benefit the Wellfleet Scholarship Fund.

Salmon investigation. In case you missed it, be sure to dig out that September issue of *Gourmet* for an in-depth look at salmon, "The Wild and the Farmed." And also check out the October 28th issue of *Newsweek*.

Do you have news worth serving up in Fish Dish? Please send you ideas to info@seafoodchoices.com. ●



TRENDS TO WATCH: Americans Eating Out

According to the National Restaurant Association, despite economic downturn Americans continue to eat out. This welcome news could give the industry a needed boost this holiday season.

- There are 858,000 foodservice locations in the U.S.
- Total restaurant industry sales are projected to reach a record \$407.8 billion in 2002—an increase of 3.9 percent.

This is not so surprising when you consider an Association survey conducted in late 2001 found more than one-in-four consumers were not eating at restaurants and using takeout/delivery as often as they would like. (Source: NRA 2002 Restaurant Industry Forecast). ●

CALENDAR

Winter 2002-2003

December

4-6—International WorkBoat Show. New Orleans, La. For more information, or to register, visit www.workboatshow.com.
16- Jan 6—Polar Express at the Bronx Zoo. Bronx, NY. Centerpiece of the annual Holiday Lights celebration. Contact 718/367 1010 or visit www.wcs.org.

January

4-7—National Association of Catering Executives Leadership Conference. Newport Beach, Calif. To register, visit www.nace.net.
19-21—Fancy Food Show. San Francisco, Calif. Sponsored by the National Association for the Specialty Food Trade. Visit www.fancyfoodshows.com for more information.
21-23—The Executive Chef Seminar. Hyde Park, NY. Offered by the Culinary Institute of America for executive chefs and chefs with extensive industry experience, including kitchen management responsibilities. To register, visit www.ciaprochef.com.

February

18-21—Aquaculture America. Louisville, Ky. Annual conference of the World Aquaculture Society. For more info or to register, visit www.was.org.

Do you have an upcoming event? Email us with the event, date, and name of sponsoring organization at info@seafoodchoices.com, or call toll free 866/SEA MORE.

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